

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 11, 2010**

ATTENDANCE: Denise Taylor Moyer, Chair; Lydia Martinez, Richard Bonney

OTHERS: Iris Molina, Social Services Director

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Taylor Moyer called the meeting to order at 6:40. There was not a quorum present.

Approval of Committee Minutes of April 13, 2010.

Approval of Committee Minutes of May 12, 2010.

Approval of Committee Minutes of June 9, 2010.

These items were not addressed due to the lack of quorum.

Informational Session with Iris Molina, Director of Social Services regarding the services that are provided to the Board of Education.

Ms. Molina said that previously the department had been City Welfare, but then the State took over. The department went from 65 down to as low as 7 employees. The name was then changed to Social Services. The State subcontracts the Social Service Department to handle the single adults.

Ms. Molina then distributed a single page summary with all the services that the department supplies to the Committee members. These include Advocacy Services, Benefits Education Services, Case Management Services, Community Services, Coordinate & Facility Services; Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Training Program; Healthy Start Program; Hispanic Elderly Programs; Information & Assistant Services; Nutrition Assessment Services; Outreach Service; Social Services and Pathway Out of Poverty/Green-Up.

Ms. Molina then gave a brief overview of the yearly coordination between the utilities companies, Legal Services, and social services regarding customers who are delinquent with their bills. Discussion followed about how this Utility Day program works and other details associated with it.

Ms. Molina said that with the Community Services frequently are free. The Food Stamps program is now called SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. This is

paired up with the Pathways Out of Poverty/Green-Up program. The program provides those clients who have successfully completed a course of four half days of instruction into educational venues such as Gateway College in order to attain certification in a specialized field. There are four basic categories for study, which Ms. Molina said that she would email to the Committee members. She then reviewed the details of the grant guidelines. The applicants must be fluent in English because of level of testing involved in the college programs.

Ms. Molina then went on to give an overview on Health Start Program. Bridgeport is responsible for the regional area including Stamford and Norwalk. When a pregnant woman comes in to the office, the staff works on an evaluation the client and help the clients access the services. DCF is involved with the clients who are under 16 years old. There is one full time staff, one part time bilingual staff member along with Ms. Molina.

The Hispanic Elderly Program receives funding from the Southwest Agency and this funding has been decreasing each year. The last client count was 243. The clients go through the pre-evaluation process and have difficulty communicating with various agencies, such as U.I., Legal Services, and others. During the month of May, there were 885 referrals from outside and the 859 cases were referred out to various agencies. In order to receive food from the various Food Pantries, the Department provides vouchers. The pantries receive a certain amount of money from the United Way and then there are various groups that donate additional food.

Another program that is handled by the department is the emergency relocation program which the department is required to do by the State. There are various regulations that govern the relocations and the situations requiring it. This program is paid for by City funding. Bridgeport Hospital has a program that has four apartments for lead victims. Bridgeport has a single male shelter, a single female shelter and a few family shelters. Each of the shelters has their own individual programs and qualifications. The length of stay varies with each program.

Council Member Martinez asked if the department works with the Bridgeport Housing Authority. Ms. Molina said that her first experience with them was during the recent tornado. The two departments worked together well. She explained that her department can refer clients to the Housing Authority, but that is all they can do.

Ms. Molina then listed the number of clients served through the various services and agencies in the month of January 2010.

Council Member Taylor Moye asked how many were on staff and if they are able to access all the programs. Ms. Molina said that there were 13 staff members. Most of them devote their mornings to one program and their afternoons to a different program. There is only one staff member who works 100% for a particular program.

The discussion then moved to a particular case and the potential resources.

Council Member Bonney asked if Ms. Molina would be sending the flyers and the posters announcing the various program events. She said that she would email the Legislative Administrator to distribute to the Committee. Because of the grant funding, there are monthly report, quarterly reports and

ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Taylor Moye adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services